(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether TRAI has taken any steps to ensure prevention of cross-subsidisation by phone companies; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government has notified "Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, Service Providers (Maintenance of Books of Accounts and other Documents) Rules, 2002" under which telecom service providers are required to maintain books of accounts to reflect service-wise operational expenses, revenues and fixed assets.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) In accordance with the provisions of Telecommunication Tariff Order (TTO), 1999, all operators are required to report tariffs to the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI). This requirement provides an opportunity to TRAI to monitor the tariffs with respect to cross subsidisation, predatory pricing, etc. TRAI intervenes on tariffs either *suo moto* or on the basis of a reference to it from any affected party on specified grounds including cross subsidisation. Further, TRAI has also formulated a System on Accounting Separation (SAS) which would assist in identifying cross subsidisation practices.

Status of SSIs

*223. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of the small scale industries, so far as production and employment generation are concerned;

(b) whether the reforms process has weakend the small scale industry sector; and

(c) if not, how the structural reforms have strengthened these industries so far as their economic viability is concerned?

THE MINISTER OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES (DR. C.P. THAKUR): (a) The present status of Small Scale Industries (SSI) in terms

of estimated production and employment for the year 2001-02 (latest available) is as under:-

Year	Production (Rs. crore)	Employment (lakh Nos.)
2001-02	6,90,316	192.23

(b) and (c) The structural reforms initiated by the government which include liberalisation and globalisation, have had mixed impact on the Small Scale Industries (SSI) in India. While these have exposed the SSI sector to greater competition both domestically and globally on one hand, they have on the other provided the SSI sector greater access to markets, cheaper imported raw materials and technologies. The SSI sector has demonstrated the resilience to withstand the competition as it has recorded a rate of growth, which is higher than the overall industrial growth.

Assistance to Singapore in combating terrorism

*224. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Singapore has sought India's assistance in effectively combating terrorism; and

(b) if so, the mutual facilitation of the security services proposed to contain the threat of terrorism?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, in view of the common concerns regarding terrorism, India and Singapore have had periodic exchange of views on this matter, including ongoing cooperation between the security agencies of the two countries.

Issuance of Passports

*225. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of passports issued by Regional Passport Offices in the country during the last five years and till date, Regional Passport Office-wise and State-wise;

(b) the average time taken by passport offices in issuing passports;